

## Introduced by Senator Alquist

February 18, 2005

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An act to amend Section 8970 of the Education Code, relating to early childhood education.

## LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 473, as introduced, Alquist. Education: early primary programs.

Existing law provides various legislative declarations concerning early primary programs, including, among others, that it is the Legislature's intent that school districts that establish an early primary program coordinate that program, whenever possible, with the Demonstration in Restructuring of Public Education program and, where applicable, with the county interagency children's services coordinating council.

This bill would make technical, nonsubstantive changes to those provisions.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: no.  
State-mandated local program: no.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

- 1 SECTION 1. Section 8970 of the Education Code is amended
- 2 to read:
- 3 8970. The Legislature hereby finds and declares all of the
- 4 following:
- 5 (a) ~~The Superintendent of Public Instruction~~ convened a Task
- 6 Force on School Readiness that prepared a report which included
- 7 the following findings and recommendations:
- 8 (1) Preschool and kindergarten programs have become more
- 9 academically oriented with an emphasis on paper and pencil

1 “seat work” and a decreased emphasis on other essential  
2 age-appropriate curricular elements such as language  
3 development; familiarity with stories, music, and oral language  
4 experiences; artistic exploration; social interaction; and large  
5 muscle development.

6 (2) Assessment tests of questionable validity and reliability are  
7 being used to delay children’s entrance to kindergarten or to  
8 place them in a two-year kindergarten.

9 (3) An appropriate, integrated experiential curriculum should  
10 be provided for children in preschool, kindergarten, and grades 1  
11 to 3, inclusive.

12 (4) Programs should meet the special needs of our culturally  
13 and linguistically diverse pupils as well as the needs of  
14 exceptional children.

15 (5) Classroom organization and teaching methods should  
16 reflect the heterogeneous skills and abilities of children in early  
17 primary programs.

18 (6) School districts should be encouraged to develop  
19 communication about linkages between programs for  
20 four-year-olds, early primary programs, and the primary and  
21 intermediate grades of elementary schools.

22 (7) The staff of early primary programs should receive  
23 appropriate education, training, and remuneration.

24 (8) Programs should be offered full-day and also should  
25 provide before- and after-school care.

26 (9) Assessment methods of children in early primary programs  
27 should be drastically altered.

28 (10) Parental involvement should be encouraged.

29 (11) A public awareness campaign should be launched  
30 describing appropriate learning practices for children in  
31 preschool, kindergarten, and grades 1 to 3, inclusive.

32 (b) ~~The Superintendent of Public Instruction~~ issued a Triennial  
33 Report on Publicly Funded Child Development Programs that  
34 documents the increasing numbers of low-income families  
35 eligible but unserved by limited preschool and child care funds,  
36 and that presents policy implications for staffing and funding  
37 issues.

38 (c) National studies show future benefits of early intervention  
39 programs to society and immediate advantages to California

1 employers in the form of reduced absenteeism, improved worker  
2 morale, and increased productivity.

3 (d) It is the intent of the Legislature that activities initiated as  
4 a result of this chapter shall continue without regard to fiscal year  
5 depending, when necessary, on continued funding.

6 (e) It is the intent of the Legislature that school districts that  
7 establish an early primary program coordinate that program,  
8 whenever possible, with the ~~Demonstration~~ *in* of Restructuring of  
9 *in* Public Education program, established pursuant to Chapter 9  
10 (commencing with Section 58900) of Part 31 and, where  
11 applicable, with the county interagency children's services  
12 ~~coordinating~~ *coordination* council, established pursuant to  
13 Article 2 (commencing with Section 18986.10) of Chapter 12.8  
14 of Part 6 of Division 9 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.